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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JERUSALEM 001952

SIPDIS

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE, IPA; NSC FOR ABRAMS/PASCUAL/RAMCHAND

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TAGS: [KWBG](#) [IS](#) [PINS](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [LE](#)

SUBJECT: PA STARTS SECURITY OPERATION SOUTH OF HEBRON;
ABBAS, FAYYAD ORDER PASF CHIEFS TO ENFORCE PA AUTHORITY

REF: A. JERUSALEM 1942

[1](#)B. JERUSALEM 1903

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. PA security forces (PASF) commanders told ConGenOffs October 26-27 that joint PASF patrols entered Yatta and al-Samu'a (Area A towns south of Hebron) early October 27, arresting 23 criminal fugitives and Hamas activists and detaining 30 other suspects. The PA National Security Forces (NSF) commander said the NSF coordinated the move with the IDF on October 26, a day after 585 PASF troops deployed into the Hebron Governorate in accordance with a three-stage security plan (Ref A). Local press report that PA President Mahmud Abbas (Abu Mazen) and PM Salam Fayyad charged PASF chiefs with enforcing PA law and authority as part of an overall West Bank security strategy. Hamas spokesmen attacked the PA's security campaign as a plot to terminate Hamas and "national resistance" in the West Bank, while a Hebron settlement spokeswoman told press that the deployment was "an illegal move" that "puts terrorists in uniform." End summary.

PASF Detain 20 in Yatta, Samu'a

[1](#)2. (C) NSF commander MG Thiab Mustafa Ali (Abu al-Fatah) said joint PASF patrols (with over 350 security officers and 100 vehicles) entered al-Samu'a (Area A, population 20,000) and then Yatta (Area A, population 35,000) south of Hebron early October 27, arresting 14 criminal fugitives and 9 Hamas activists and detaining 30 other suspects for questioning. MG Ali said the NSF coordinated the move with the IDF and received approval, as stipulated by the IDF's West Bank commander (ref A) on October 26. PA forces raided the private al-'Itimad Hospital in Yatta based on information that it was operating illegally, and confiscated expired and smuggled medicines.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Hebron NSF commander BG Samih Jamil al-Sayfi said the deployed force of 585 soldiers and police (composition described ref A) deployed into makeshift barracks in central Hebron without incident (except for a vehicle collision that injured two Presidential Guard soldiers en route from Ramallah) early October 25. Al-Sayfi released a press statement October 26 announcing the PA security operation, targeting "outlaws, criminals anyone who holds firearms and anyone who violates law and order," and calling for citizens' cooperation and support.

[1](#)4. (SBU) In an October 26 operation carried out separately, PA Preventive Security and police officers attempted to arrest Hamas activist Wadah Muhammad Abu Ghayshah, but were unable to execute the arrest after residents attacked the officers. The PA detained 4 Hamas relatives and associates of Abu Ghayshah during the incident.

Abbas, Fayyad Charge PA Commanders
with Imposing Order and PA Authority

15. (C) Local press report PA President Abbas met with PASF chiefs on October 25 and received briefings on current security plans and operations. Press report Abbas instructed the chiefs "to enforce PA law and authority while maintaining good relations with the common man on the street." Press reported that PM Salam Fayyad gave PASF commanders guidance to establish law and order throughout the Hebron Governorate as part of an overall strategy to provide Palestinians with security throughout the West Bank. In an October 27 conversation with the Consul General, PM Fayyad said he is pleased with initial PASF steps in Hebron and plans to visit the city on October 28 for briefings by the security chiefs.

Hamas Denounces "Treasonous" Security
Coordination, Hebron Operation

16. (SBU) Lebanon-based Hamas spokesman Usama Hamdan claimed to press October 27 that PASF had arrested two Hamas activists in Hebron and extradited them to Israel, a claim PA intelligence officers denied. Gaza-based Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhum attacked the PA's security campaign as part of a PA plot to terminate Hamas and "national resistance" in the West Bank, in collaboration with American and Israeli authorities. Gaza-based Hamas PLC member Ismayil al-Ashqar said, "security coordination with the Israeli occupation is treasonous" and called for PA commanders who coordinated with the IDF to be "prosecuted."

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Settlers: PA Deployment
"Puts Terrorists in Uniform"

17. (U) Hebron settlement spokeswoman Orit Struck told Israeli press October 27 that GOI approval of the Hebron deployment was "an illegal move" that "puts terrorists in uniform." Other settler leaders claimed that the PA forces would attack Jewish residents in the Hebron area.

WALLES